

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A combined oil ring comprising an oil ring with upper and lower rails and an expander for applying contact pressure radially outwards on said oil ring, wherein said upper and lower rails of said oil ring have outer circumferential surfaces, ~~comprising any of the structures described in the following items (a) through (c):~~

~~(a) An outer circumferential surface of said upper rail comprising: a flat surface with an axial width of 0.05 to 0.3 millimeters, a curved surface joining to the upper end of said flat surface and to the upper surface of said upper rail, and a sharp corner joining to the lower end of said flat surface and to the lower surface of said upper rail;~~

~~An outer circumferential surface of said lower rail comprising: a flat surface with an axial width of 0.05 to 0.3 millimeters, a curved surface joining to the lower end of said flat surface and to the lower surface of said lower rail, and a sharp corner joining to the upper end of said flat surface and the upper surface of said lower rail;~~

~~(b) An outer circumferential surface of said upper rail comprising: a curved surface joining to the upper surface of said upper rail with the radial rail width decreasing from the lower end of said upper rail;~~

~~An outer circumferential surface of said lower rail comprising: a curved surface joining to~~

Preliminary Amendment
U.S. Application Serial No. 10/727,560

~~the lower surface of said lower rail with the radial rail width decreasing from the upper end of said lower rail;~~

(c) ~~An~~ wherein said outer circumferential surface of said upper rail ~~comprising:~~ comprises an asymmetrical barrel curved surface whose highest point is located at the lower side axially from the center of the axial rail width; and

~~[[An]]~~ wherein said outer circumferential surface of said lower rail ~~comprising:~~ comprises an asymmetrical barrel curved surface whose highest point is located at the lower side axially from the center of the axial rail width.

Claim 2 (canceled).

Claim 3 (currently amended) A combined oil ring as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ a radial width on the upper side of said curved surface ~~described in said item (c)~~ is from 25 to 75 micrometers, and ~~[[the]]~~ a radial width on the lower side is from 1 to 20 micrometers.

Claim 4 (previously presented) A combined oil ring as claimed in claim 1, wherein the outer circumferential surfaces of said upper and lower rails are subjected to a low-friction surface treatment.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Preliminary Amendment
U.S. Application Serial No. 10/727,560

Claim 6 (previously presented) A combined oil ring as claimed in claim 3, wherein the outer

- circumferential surfaces of said upper and lower rails are subjected to a low-friction surface
- treatment.